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S E C R E T ANKARA 001744

SIPDIS

STATE FOR P, NEA/NGA, EUR/SE, PMAT, AND L; OSD FOR ISA, ISP
AND LEGAL; JCS FOR J3, J5 AND LEGAL; EUCOM FOR GEN. WALD,
J3, J4, J5, POLAD; CENTCOM FOR J3, J5 AND POLAD;

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/19/2013

TAGS: PREL MARR MOPS TU IZ

SUBJECT: TURKISH GENERAL STAFF TEMPORARILY SUSPENDS OEF
BLANKET CLEARANCE

(u) Classified by Ambassador W. Robert Pearson. Reasons:
1.5 (B and D)

¶11. (S) The Embassy learned late March 18 from AMCC Incirlik that the Turkish General Staff (TGS) has temporarily suspended the blanket clearance that the GOT had provided the US for aircraft in support of Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF). TGS Deputy J3 for Command and Control Maj. Gen. Ozer reportedly took the decision to suspend the clearance after learning that three USAF-contracted 747 aircraft had used the blanket clearance to bring into Incirlik Air Base cargo in support of site preparations. Ozer shares the widely-held view among GOT civilian and military officials that the OEF blanket clearance does not/not apply to aircraft delivering site preparation-related material.

¶12. (S) The DATT has requested a meeting with Maj. Gen. Ozer to discuss the issue in an effort to clarify any misunderstanding that may have occurred and attempt to have the OEF blanket clearance reinstated.

¶13. (S) Comment: In the Turks' minds, activities related to Operation Enduring Freedom and those related to contingency operations against Iraq (including site preparations) are distinct and unrelated. MFA and TGS officials have cautioned us against using OEF-related arrangements and procedures for site preparation or other Iraq-related activities. In turn, the Embassy, EUCOM Forward and the Office of Defense Cooperation (ODC) have taken a number of steps to ensure that, in the case of Iraq-related activities, the USG continues to operate in Turkey within the strict confines of the terms of the site preparation MOU. The recent incident involving the USAF-contracted 747's that resulted in a suspension of our OEF blanket clearance is an important reminder of the GOT sensitivities on Iraq-related activity in Turkey and highlights the importance of making sure that we continue to operate according to the agreed upon arrangements with the Turks.

PEARSON